





# CANADIAN COAST GUARD FAST RESCUE CRAFT

Rigid hull inflatable boats (RHI's) are deployed as fast rescue craft (FRC's) to enhance Canadian Coast Guard search and rescue capabilities on the West Coast. These manoeuvrable and versatile craft operate from shore stations and from major Coast Guard vessels.

The Canadian built five-metre and seven-metre RHI's have a fibreglass deep "V" hull with conventional inflatable tubes attached. Flexible sides allow the craft to go alongside other vessels without sustaining or causing damage and allow people to be recovered from the water with minimum difficulty. The seven-metre boats are powered by twin 150 hp outboard engines for a maximum operating speed of 45 knots. The five-metre craft are equipped with two 90 hp outboard engines for a speed of 35 knots.

The FRC's are fitted with VHF radios and depth sounders; the larger craft also have radars and GPS equipment. Search and Rescue (SAR) gear includes a fire and salvage pump, first aid equipment, stretchers and searchlights.

The craft were initially introduced in 1972 as part of the Inshore Rescue Boat (IRB) program that was designed to provide seasonal daylight rescue coverage in areas of

high recreational traffic. The IRB program has since evolved into a twenty-four hour all-weather medium range service which operates in four areas of the British Columbia coast between May and September. Meanwhile, fast rescue craft have become an integral component of Canadian Coast Guard and Coast Guard Auxiliary operations.

Each Inshore Rescue Boat is operated by two, three-person crews of university students who work two-week rotating shifts. While on shift, these crew are on call 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. Canadian Coast Guard personnel operate FRC's from all major Coast Guard vessels and from Canadian Coast Guard Stations along the coast. The speed and range of these RHI's greatly expand the SAR coverage afforded the West Coast marine community.

FRC crew members receive specialized training in RHI operation, seamanship, and search and rescue procedures at the Coast Guard school in Bamfield, British Columbia. Personnel are also qualified in marine rescue first aid, radio communications, and as Canadian Coast Guard Courtesy Small Vessel Examiners.

## Inshore Rescue Stations:

CG 503 Gabriola Island  
CG 505 Pender Harbour  
CG 508 Alert Bay  
CG 509 Desolation Sound

## For further information contact:

Canadian Coast Guard Public Affairs  
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Canadian  
Coast Guard

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